

STRATEGY OF DIGITAL MEDIA: FACEBOOK AND THE EGYPTIAN YOUTH

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ABSTRACT

Who could have imagined that a social network created to connect college students after leaving campus would turn in only six years to have a population larger than that of Mexico, France and the US combined! Facebook, a social network created by Mark Zuckerberg early 2004, was only meant to allow college students to stay in touch after they had left their campus. The chief executive of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg, said he could have never imagined when they were getting started with creating Facebook all of the ways people would be using Facebook. He added that Facebook users are the ones who have created the worldwide movement. The speed with which Facebook hit the five hundred million users is a sign of its accelerating growth. (Pepitone, 2010, July 21)

KEYWORDS: Digital Strategy, Digital Media, Facebook and Egyptian Youth

INTRODUCTION

What are Social Networks?

Social networks are websites that share some conventional features, which means that you are having your individual page on the internet. Most often, users form profiles that include information concerning themselves. Also, users upload photos to their profiles, place blog entries for other users to be able to read, seek other users who have similar interests, share and gather lists of contacts. Also, users' profiles include a section that is devoted to comments from their friends and other users as well (Byrne, 2010).

Evolution of Social Networks

Approximately once a decade, a major new technology emerges that essentially changes the business landscape. In each case, despite preceding competitive dynamics, businesses that comprehend and properly adopt the technology win. However, those who fail to adopt lose. In the 1970s, it was mainframe computing; in the 1980s, it was the PC; in the 1990s, it was the Internet; and now it is the turn of becoming online social networks (Shih, 2009).

Online social networks have altered the nature of web communities. They are adding a layer of relationships and identity. According to Harvard Berkman Center Fellow, Danah Boyd, stated that "the popularity of social networking sites signifies a behavioural shift online from interest driven practices to socially driven practices," (cited in Shih, 2009: 34). The single exclusion to this is celebrity fan relationships. (Shih, 2009).

What is Facebook?

Facebook started in the United States early 2004 as a means for helping college students keep in touch with each other after leaving campus. Since then, it has evolved to be the largest social network world-wide. (Byrne, 2010).

David Kirkpatrick, the author of *The Facebook Effect: The Inside Story of the Company that is Connecting the World*, writes that Facebook is becoming bigger every day. Many of the problems that are recognized with Facebook are

indicative of a company that includes more than two thousand employees serving half a billion users. (Rohrer, 2010). Facebook is launched in more than 50 language versions that are available for the web users. Facebook has added Arabic and Hebrew languages to be available to its web users. The California-based internet firm announces that it targets at creating the Facebook website in each language worldwide ("Facebook in Arabic", 2009).

Why Facebook?

Facebook is identified as a method of marketing products. Facebook is being used increasingly by businesses as well. This is because Facebook users regularly spend 55 minutes on Facebook daily. They join an average of thirteen groups in addition to including around thirty five million status updates daily. There are about 5.3 billion fan pages. On a monthly basis, Facebook users upload approximately three billion photos, announce about 3.5 million events; also, each Facebook user is invited to an average of three events. (Electronic Media in Egypt: Reality and Challenges, IDSC, 2010).

Facebook is also emerging as a popular recruiting means essentially due to its widespread reach to over five hundred million users around the world. There are many recruiting applications that are built for the Facebook platform, including several by known job sites such as Simply Hired and Jobster. (Shih, 2009).

FACEBOOK: ONLINE BUSINESS COMPANY

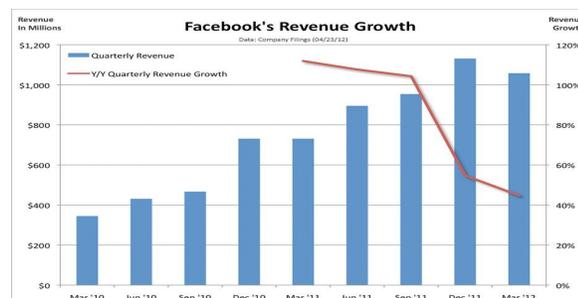
The Financials of Facebook

Facebook is a privately held organization that does not disclose financial information. However, the company recently applied for private equity funding from Goldman Sachs. According to Goldman's reports, for the nine months ended at September 2010, Facebook recorded revenues of \$ 1.2 billion with earnings of \$ 355 million. In 2009, the company is said to have gained revenues of \$777 million with earnings of \$200 million. Goldman, which invests \$ 450 million of its capital in Facebook, is raising at least \$1.5 billion from its prosperous clients during the limited-time offering. (Goldstein, & Oreskovic, 2011)

The Revenue Model of Facebook

Most of Facebook's revenues are gained from advertisements. According to a report by Borell Associates, social networking advertising spending is predicted to increase to \$10 billion in 2012, \$12 billion by 2014 and \$14 billion by 2015. (Mitra, 2011)

Another revenue source is Facebook Credits, which is the online currency bought by users and the only method of payment for Facebook's online games such as Pet Society and Farmville. The currency can be used as well in order to buy virtual gifts and cards and also to participate in charitable donations. Facebook saves a 30% share of these credits. (O'Neill, 2010)



Facebook Revenue Growth (Blodget, 2012)

Facebook's Acquisitions

Throughout the year 2010, Facebook has enhanced its site features through talent purchases of small entrepreneurial firms. Facebook is expected to carry on making these smaller acquisitions.

Currently, Facebook's stock trades in the secondary market, generally between employees and other small investors. The company sustains that they are still at the SEC requisite norm of 499 shareholders that lets them preserve their information private. However, with the current private equity present to Goldman, many believe that the company's IPO may be coming shortly. Goldman has esteemed the organization at \$50 billion, thus transforming to an earnings multiple of 140. (Mitra, 2011)

Zuckerberg said the reason that lies behind Facebook's floating is not because the company is in need of new capital as it is already generating plenty. Instead, Zuckerberg stated that, as a company, they are going public for both their employees and investors as well. He added that since they made a commitment to the employees and investors when giving them equity, therefore, they would work hard to be able to make it worth a lot and the IPO is fulfilling its commitment. (Pratley, 2012)

The Strategy of Facebook

Facebook's strategy, according to Fortune's writer, David Kirkpatrick, is based on a rather new concept, which is the word of mouth marketing tool. (Kirkpatrick, 2007) Now Facebook is mechanizing this process, which is merging e-commerce with the word-of-mouth marketing method. While a Facebook customer buys something, the seller asks for authorization to promote that fact to his or her social network and, apparently, pay Facebook a fee if the customer agrees. (Cited in Kirkpatrick, 2007)

In an interview with Sheryl Sandberg, Facebook COO, said that the company will be concentrating on increasing its community and on monetization. To add some transparency to an otherwise standard statement, we can declare that Facebook's strategy most probably includes the following main three goals: the first goal is increasing user base, which is increasing the network effect further than the existing 175 million user base. The second goal is increasing the wallet share, which is finding new methods to make money, like for instance, advertising, applications, paid services and revenue share on partnerships. The third goal is maintaining leadership in social media networks, where they successfully compete with and beat the other online media platforms and methods on which users spend money and time or maintain a partnership, such as with Twitter, for a part of the action. (Lichtenberg, 2009)

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This research argues that Facebook is a global cultural, social, political and economic venture. Since this research is taking Egypt as a case of the digital strategy and digital media, therefore, the researcher is conducting the methodological approach on the Egyptian youth, who are literate and have an internet access, in order to determine how Facebook, as a social network, has evolved to become a marketing corporation that is more of a business than a social network.

To achieve the purpose of the study a main research question is formulated as follows:

How has Facebook evolved from a limited American social networking site into a globally successful marketing corporation whose economic value rivals that of other major multinationals?

This main question of the research is translated into a number of investigative sub-questions and sub-hypothesis:

Sub-Questions

- 1- Why has Facebook's population reached over 500 million users in only 6 years?
- 2- What type of need does Facebook as a medium fulfil?
- 3- What has Facebook replaced as a marketing product?
- 4- Who is making money on Facebook?
- 5- Why Facebook has replaced other social networks?
- 6- Why are all the applications for free on Facebook?
- 7- Are Egyptian youth dependent on Facebook as a social network?
- 8- Is Facebook a means of social communication?
- 9- Is Facebook users' privacy at risk on such a social network?

Sub-hypothesis

- 1- Facebook is at the heart of serious political campaigns.
- 2- The greater the usage of Facebook, the less the social involvement.
- 3- Egyptian youth express their opinions with more freedom on Facebook.

This research falls under the interpretive paradigm and the appropriate methodological methods and qualitative research methods. According to the objective of the study, the two main research methods that apply for this research are first the focus groups research technique and the second is intensive interviews research technique.

Focus groups will be conducted with Egyptian youth aging 18-30 years old. Ten focus groups will be conducted, where each group consists of ten candidates. Focus groups method is chosen due to different reasons; the first reason is to develop knowledge concerning their dealing with Facebook; second is to create proposals from the issues that appear throughout the sessions; third is developing questions that can be used in the intensive interviews; fourth is obtaining feedback on the findings of research in which focus group members contributed.

Intensive interviews are conducted with several segments. The First segment is marketing specialists who regard Facebook as a part of their business and marketing strategy. The second segment is media specialists who view Facebook as a social network inside a medium, the Internet. The third segment is political specialists who analyze the relation between Facebook and the Egyptian youth regarding the January 2011 Revolution. The fourth segment is psychological specialists who analyze the relation between the social structure of Facebook and the Egyptian youth. (See Appendix)

DISCUSSIONS

Applying Analyzed data on Research sub-Questions and sub-Hypotheses

The first, second and fifth sub-research questions are why Facebook's population has reached over 500 million users in only 6 years; what type of need Facebook as a medium fulfils; and why has Facebook replaced other social networks.

The data analyzed from the focus groups have approved that Facebook includes all what its users want and in need of such as reconnecting with old friends and colleagues and getting engaged in their updates and life experiences; in addition to including all what one would search for in a social network with the privilege of being easy in its usage as well as being applied in several languages. Therefore, the number of Facebook users increase and its usage as a social network accelerate rapidly.

Furthermore, 85% of the focus group sample has approved that Facebook includes all the features that one would search for in a social network, as a result, this makes Facebook the main social network that youth would prefer to use.

The media segment interviewed in this research has affirmed that Facebook has succeeded in fulfilling the need of belonging and the desire of wanting to stay in contact with all the events occurring in family and friends' daily lives. Also, the psychological segment agreed upon the fact that just when youth rarely have a social life, Facebook has fulfilled this gap and has given them the space to communicate and being a part of the globalization process. Also, this segment has added that relying on the fact that Facebook is a virtual communication; therefore, one can express one's own opinions, thoughts and ideas regarding several issues freely without being regulated.

Therefore, having a social network that has all what any user would search for and gathers most of anyone's friends and old-colleagues and fulfils the need of belonging and enjoy having a social life are enough for a social network like Facebook to succeed, increase the number of its users quickly and makes its users stick to Facebook and neglects other social networks.

The third sub-research question is what Facebook has replaced as a marketing product.

Data collected and analyzed from reviewing the previous literature, and the methodological methods applied in this research has approved that Facebook hasn't replaced anything as a marketing product. The media experts have essentially approved that Facebook is another marketing tool to gain a share of advertising. It will not replace print or broadcast but will probably siphon off some of the profits of those channels. The Internet, as a collective, faces the same challenges as cable television, too many outlets, splintered market shares, and others, each competing for the attention of a de-massified audience. Those companies shifting exclusively to Internet vehicles such as Facebook are now finding difficulty in finding an audience, whereas the traditional media still can produce better results for advertisers because of their clearly identified and relatively loyal audiences. Therefore, the results have shown that this sub-research question is refuted.

The fourth sub-research question is who is making money on Facebook.

Regarding the intensive interviews conducted with the marketing and media segments, the main aim of establishing Facebook is making profit. Facebook has established itself as a brand name and that's what makes the company valuable and encourages advertisers to publish ads on Facebook pages. Therefore, advertisers make money through using Facebook as a network where they publish ads on with high quality and targeting specific audience with the least cost. In addition, Facebook as an organization makes money as well through having such ads being published on its social network.

As for the results analyzed from the focus groups, almost 96% of the sample approved that Facebook is a good tool for its users to make money through indicating that advertising products on user's profile encourage people on the friend list to buy such products thus the user makes money with almost paying no cost for advertising.

Throughout the first quarter of 2012, payments on Facebook grew to form approximately 18% of the social network's revenue, which is close to nearly \$200 million. (Businessweek, 2012)

According to Experian Hitwise, a company that measures website traffic, Facebook accounts for almost 9% of all online visits in the US. It adds that Americans spend an average of 20 minutes in each Facebook visit. However, worldwide, approximately one billion people have a Facebook profile. (Businessweek, 2012)

Chris Dixon, an investor, says that Facebook has concrete assets that embrace an enormous number of tremendously engaged users, its social graph, and Facebook Connect. He added that Facebook should be able to monetize through another business model apart from advertising such as creating the social Smartphone or even sell data analytical products. (Dixon, 2012)

Therefore, Facebook founders and employees make money from Facebook.

The sixth sub-research question is why all the applications are for free on Facebook. Based upon Facebook's strategy and main goals, making all applications for free on Facebook easily grabs the users to actually utilize such applications. After becoming interested and stick to such applications, users start to use Facebook's credits, which are regarded as the only method of payment on applications. Therefore, making applications for free is more of a method that engages users in using such applications where later they become attached. As a result, they start to use Facebook's credits as being the only method of payment in order to continue using and applying such applications which Facebook user is interested in.

The seventh and eighth sub-research questions are whether Egyptian youth are dependent on Facebook as a social network and whether Facebook is a means of social communication.

According to the results analyzed from the focus group method, nearly 85% of the sample affirmed that Facebook is an important social network, defining important as a social network that has great significance and value in terms of being successful. The sample elaborated that Facebook has all the detailed information that one can search for such as news, entertaining games, applications, and various groups, in addition to the announcements that are concerned with job vacancies in multiple fields, and as well each users' interests, information and updates.

The psychological segment interviewed in this research has approved that Egyptian literate youth who can afford having an internet connection and a computer, are dependent on Facebook as a social network due to several reasons. The first reason is the sense of worry and being unsafe that youth feels due to the injustice life they felt before the Egyptian 25th January Revolution 2011 and the insecure feeling that has increased after the revolution due to the insecurity and continuous violent acts that are occurring as a result of the absence of police forces in the streets and the widespread of criminals that has resulted in an increase in the number of crimes occurring. All these circumstances has pushed the Egyptian youth to search for a place where they can freely express their opinions and thoughts and defend their arguments without having any regulations on whatever they post and there is no better place to socially communicate rather than Facebook. The second reason is that youth do not have a social life; therefore, they depend on Facebook as a means of social communication that they actually are in need of. The third reason is because Facebook is a virtual communication network, therefore, youth can speak up with more freedom without sugar-coating their opinions and arguments. Consequently, youth use Facebook as a means of social communication where one can speak up without restricting his freedom of expression.

Based upon the results analyzed from the methodological approaches of this research, the seventh and eighth research questions are approved. Egyptian youth are dependent on Facebook as a social network and Facebook is a means of social communication.

The ninth and last sub-research question is whether Facebook users' privacy is at risk on such a social network.

Facebook is attached to the social Web business model; however, Facebook still has gaps concerned with privacy and personalisation. This is because social networks such as Facebook include various information that are concerned with

individuals from all over the world, yet they have not figured out an accurate method to be able to create a secured, safe, personalized framework for users' profiles. (Mitra, 2011)

Furthermore, analysts at Morgan Stanley admitted that Facebook should search for the appropriate balance of information sharing. They added that such balance will enable it to convey favourable ad targeting without provoking users or legislators who request greater degrees of privacy. (Fletcher, 2012)

The data analyzed from the focus group entire sample has approved that Facebook as a social network does not protect complete privacy. They stated that there is a lack of privacy on the Internet as a medium and accordingly there is a lack of privacy protection on Facebook. They elaborated that one's information and detailed contacts can be easily hacked through different ways on the Internet as a medium and its networks as part of this medium. In addition, they added that Facebook as a social network does not inform its users with the updated privacy settings unless the users personally check them. They also added that in the global village we are living currently, privacy is diminishing and Facebook is part of the cause.

Therefore, the ninth sub-research question is approved and Facebook users' privacy is at risk on such social networks.

The first and third research sub-hypotheses state that Facebook is at the heart of serious political campaigns and Egyptian youth express their opinions with more freedom on Facebook.

According to the data analyzed from the focus group sample, the entire sample affirmed that Facebook was the main moderator for the occurrence of the Egyptian 25th January Revolution 2011 and its main key of success. This is based upon Facebook's role in being the only place where youth expressed their opinions, thoughts and beliefs with a high level of freedom that was free from limitations or barriers, according to their evaluation.

According to the media segment interviewed in this research, Facebook played a minor role in the Egyptian revolution, directly as a mobilizer of opinion and participation; however, its real power came as an agenda-setting instrument for established global news networks that followed individual Facebook pages. This segment approved that the revolution was facilitated and accelerated through the usage of social networks such as Facebook. They added that Facebook had a role in organizing people to lead the protest.

Furthermore, Facebook has facilitated the communication among its users and encouraged them to speak up and have the sense of 'I Have a Voice' that can be heard freely without being restricted. From a theoretical opinion, the media segment affirms that Facebook as a direct tool had a minimal effect but when it is combined with established news media such as Al Jazeera, the role might expand a bit; however, its main role is organizing the protestors and encouraging them to express, defend and argue their thoughts and opinions with complete freedom.

As for the political segment, they approve that Facebook has developed a means for youth to speak up freely and express their opinions without being limited. They also agree that Facebook facilitated people's gathering and served as silent demonstrations since the beginning of developing groups that reflect their actual criticism and refusal to the acts of the ruling parties.

Therefore, the first and third sub-research hypotheses are supported. Facebook is at the heart of serious political campaigns and Egyptian youth express their opinions with more freedom on Facebook. But the researcher pinpoints an important factor, which is that the approval of such hypotheses applies to only a certain segment of the Egyptian citizens, which is the literate citizens who has an appropriate financial status as almost 30% of the Egyptians are illiterate and

almost 40% are in the poverty rate. Statistics have shown that the subscribers of Facebook in Egypt are about five million of a population more than 80 million Egyptians; about three million of the subscribers (58%) are under the age of 25 years-old; and about 63% of these members are male; thus making it the youngest Facebook community in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Region (Malin, 2011).

The second sub-research hypothesis is the greater the usage of Facebook, the less the social involvement.

Youth are encouraged to use Facebook as a means of social communication so as to reconnect with old friends and old colleagues and get in contact with relatives and friends who live in foreign countries. (Mitra, 2011)

The results of the focus groups sample have approved that the older generation create Facebook accounts either to reconnect with their immigrant family members and stay in touch with their news, updates and even chatting with them or to entertain through using Facebook applications and Facebook games.

Also, the psychological segment in this research has approved that youth depends on Facebook as their source of expressing their opinions especially due to the fact that it is a virtual communication method where ideas, opinions, and thoughts are freely expressed without being restricted or regulated. Also, since Facebook is a part of the globalization process, therefore, it enhances the communication between people who come from different countries, backgrounds, religious views, and beliefs.

Therefore, the more the usage of Facebook the more the virtual social involvement and the greater the usage of Facebook the less the social involvement in terms of visiting relatives, talking with friends via landline phones and the less the occurrence of such practices and activities.

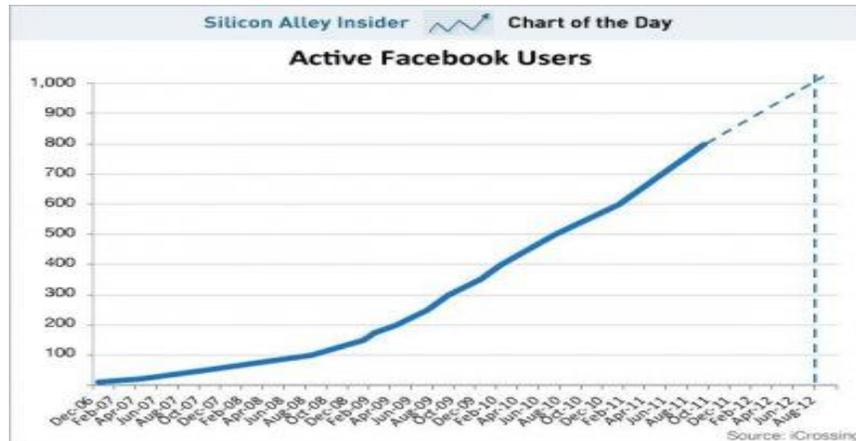
CHALLENGING THE MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION: A LINKING POINT

The aim of this study is answering its main research question, which is how has Facebook evolved from a limited American social networking site into a globally successful marketing corporation whose economic value rivals that of other major multinationals. After reviewing the research findings, one can assert that the evolutionary theory can represent the theoretical framework of this dissertation. Evolution demands change. Evolutionary theories have been concerned with understanding dynamic processes, like for instance, the appearance of new organizations and new structures of organization, changes that happen in organizations and the life cycles of industries.

It is this element of the evolutionary approach that to a certain extent clarifies why it is achieving a growing amount of attention. The world of business and organization is generally experienced as being of regular change. Evolutionary theorists argue that in order to obtain any understanding of why and how organizations and industries appear, extend and at times disappear, the processes of organization and industrial alteration over time have to be studied first. Evolutionary approaches entail that the dynamic processes contain an element of chance in them. (Barron, 2003)

Previous studies in addition to the findings of this research have approved that Facebook is being regarded as an online business company. Since the growth of social web is considered one of the biggest technological developments of this decade, and Facebook is one of the biggest trends of social web; therefore, this is considered to be a style that has an ability to drive the evolution of the internet as a medium in the forthcoming years.

The social network site, Facebook, which started in 2004 as a social utility aiming at helping people in order to connect and communicate with diversified groups, has accelerated in growth with the help of its users as those are the ones who have created the worldwide movement that was totally unexpected by its creators. As shown in figure 5.1: Facebook Users' Growth, the number of Facebook users has increased dramatically.



Facebook Users' Growth Chart (Blodget, 2012)

Facebook has unexpectedly turned out to be very huge, and very fast as well and the entire size of this social network could have never been predicted at the beginning of its development. The original mission of creating such network was only to form a Facebook for Harvard University. However, a lot of the problems that are recognized with Facebook are pinpointing a company that includes a couple of thousand employees that is supplying over half a billion users. Previous studies elaborated earlier, have approved that the increase in the number of Facebook users is an unplanned outcome as there is no way any company or organization can scale up its systems in such a rapid manner where people do find themselves reliant on it. (Rohrer, 2010)

Studies have also affirmed that Facebook is currently recognized as a means of marketing products as for instance if one is conducting a business, Facebook can never be disregarded; even if one is not having an active presence on Facebook, still probably one need to consider advertising on Facebook. (Electronic Media in Egypt: Reality and Challenges, IDSC, 2010).

For a process to be evolutionary, it has to involve three different mechanisms: *Blind Variation, Selection, and retention*. Variation means that there must be some mechanism by which innovations are introduced. Selection means that there must be a system that differentiates useful from harmful innovations and that present some benefit on the individual that has the useful innovation, such as reduced risk of failure or increased profit. Retention means that useful innovations should have an approach of spreading from the original innovators to other units. (Barron, 2003)

Facebook was introduced as a social network when Harvard students founded this company, where its membership at the beginning was restricted to Harvard students only. Later, it expanded gradually to reach colleges in the Boston area, Stanford University, and the Ivy League. Since then, Facebook really gained real support, and later it allowed students at other universities to become registered, then moved to allow high school students and finally, it became for anyone whose minimum age is 13.

During the year, 2010, Facebook has enhanced its site features through talent purchases of small entrepreneurial firms; like for instance, Facebook developed an acquisition that has facilitated Facebook users to enlarge their network through searching their friends using their e-mail list. Zuckerberg stated that they buy companies in order to make their users more engaged into their social network, in addition, to increasing the number of their users and as a result increase the company's profit. The process of the development of the social networking site, Facebook, as an online business company proves that process of the development of this company is an evolutionary process.

Reflections on Facebook Strategy

Since Facebook strategy concentrates on increasing the company's community and monetization, therefore, it is important to study each country's needs and environment. In this regard, the following part is going to reflect the implications of data analysis for the issue of Facebook in Egypt as a case.

The researcher considers the results of this research as a matrix for a form of strategy that applies to Facebook users in Egypt.

Data analyzed in this research approves that Facebook's success in Egypt is due to two main reasons. The first reason is the lack of having a social life, specifically, the youth. And the second reason is the need to express opinions, thoughts, beliefs, feelings and reactions towards the life circumstances they are experiencing on a daily basis. Egyptian youth needs to feel that they have a voice that they can use to argue, struggle and defend their own beliefs and Facebook facilitated this mission through providing them with a social network that has several pages, applications and all they need to experience freedom of expression that they actually felt that they lack. Furthermore, Facebook added to Egyptian youth the feeling of belonging through using virtual communication. However, based upon previous studies, Facebook users in general worldwide spend more time on Facebook than they do on other social activities and practices. (Jones, & Hogan, 2010)

Facebook's successful strategic matrix in Egypt lies in mainly the increase in the network user base that resulted in a statement, which is that everyone has a Facebook's account so no one would discard checking Facebook at least once daily to update status, check others' status, posts, photos and other activities available on this social network; also, the word-of-mouth strategy has a role in increasing the user base in Egypt.

However, Facebook as a company should put into consideration some points that the researcher concluded from the data analysis that limits enhancing the network in Egypt. First, the number of illiterates in Egypt is high; in addition to, the increase in the poverty level. Such facts limit the role that Facebook plays as an advertising method, which the company rely on to increase its wallet share. The Second point is the lack of privacy on Facebook. Due to the traditions and cultures in Egypt, many users, specifically females, fear from loading information, contact details, photos and other private material on Facebook referring this attitude to the lack of privacy on the Internet as a medium and Facebook as part of this medium. As a consequence, Facebook's company should find suitable methods to increase its privacy settings and find new forms of informing its users of how to apply such settings and be updated with them on a regular basis.

Finally, the researcher considers Facebook as the main social network that Egyptian youth, specifically, depends on as their source of speaking up. Furthermore, advertising on Facebook is actually an asset that advertisers utilize due to its high quality, low cost compared to other advertising methods and ability to reach wide audience in the least time and least effort.

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APPENDIX

List of Interviewees:

- Ms. Salma Koraa, Marketing Assistant at Citystars Corporation. Citystars is regarded as the primary integrated urban development project of its kind in not only the Middle East but Europe as well.
- Mrs. Nesma Nader, owner and director of Kids Club Nursery. Nader established her nursery in 2012 and counted on Facebook alone in order to publicize, market, and advertise her newly opened nursery.
- Mrs. Sherine Ramzy, Senior Marketing Executive at the Cairo-based American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt
- Mr. Sherif Saleh, Marketing Director at the American University in Cairo (AUC).
- Mr. George Atef, Marketing Manager at Modern Sciences and Arts University in Egypt (MSA).
- Dr. Ralph Berenger (Doctor of Arts, Idaho State University), Assistant Professor, College of Arts and Sciences at the American University in Sharjah (AUS)
- Dr. Rasha Abdullah (PhD in Communication, University of Miami), Associate Professor and graduate director at the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at the American University in Cairo (AUC).
- Dr. Naila Hamdy (PhD in Mass Communication, Cairo University), Assistant Professor at the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at the American University in Cairo (AUC)
- Mr. Ashraf Sadek, Managing Editor of the Egyptian Gazette newspaper.
- Dr. Manar El Shorbagy, Adjunct Professor at the Department of Political Science at the American University in Cairo (AUC).
- Dr. Adel El Madany(PhD in Psychiatry, Al-Azhar University), Professor of Psychiatry in Al-Azhar University and a Member of Egyptian Association for Psychiatry Medicine.
- Dr. Hala Abdel Haq, Adjunct Professor at the psychology department at the American University in Cairo (AUC).